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Acting Secretary (with Murphy, Merchant, McBride) met with Foreign Minister Couve de Murville (accompanied by Alphand, Beaumarchais, Lucet) March 31.

~~this~~ morning/ Conversation mostly related to Germany. Following summary ~~conversation~~ based uncleared memorandum conversation.

1) Couve analyzed principal difference between UK and French position on German problem as contrast between UK willingness to exhibit flexibility at outset negotiations with Soviets while French feel West must be tough. Couve also complained that for several months now West had been discussing details of contingency planning for Berlin without having agreed on basic policy. He added our policy must be based on manifest will to maintain our rights. He did not repeat not believe UN role should go beyond receiving report from Western nations concerned. Acting Secretary agreed we should show manifest will insist on our rights in order prevent any Soviet miscalculation. Couve said he thought Soviets unlikely take any drastic action now especially with Foreign Ministers' meeting now set for May 11, and with summi

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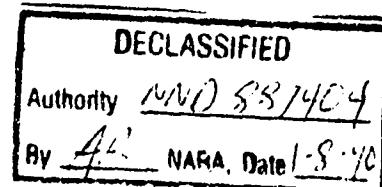
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meeting increasingly probable. He thought period of maximum danger would come QUOTE after failure of the summit meeting UNQUOTE, when question would arise of what overt measures we should take to show our determination maintain rights in Berlin.

2) Couve and Acting Secretary agreed that concept of disengagement as thus far presented by British seemed vague and unsatisfactory. Couve said it was difficult determine what was in British mind on this subject. Acting Secretary said this point had not repeat not been clarified at Camp David talks. Couve and Acting Secretary agreed British probably had in mind accepting some QUOTE thinning out UNQUOTE or disengagement proposal in trade for maintaining status quo in Berlin. It was agreed we should have some comprehensive package for Soviet which might include some proposal along QUOTE thinning out UNQUOTE lines but that it should be quite clear to Soviets this package was inseparable. In response to question from Alphant, Merchant said British idea for QUOTE new title UNQUOTE to Berlin also seemed unclear except that they apparently intended substitute some contractual arrangement for present Berlin status. It was agreed that this was unsatisfactory as substitute for our present clear rights.

3) Couve also raised Spanish NATO membership saying France QUOTE rather in favor UNQUOTE of admitting Spain and noting Brentano had raised this question with him. Merchant noted most NATO countries now favored admitting Spain and opposition appeared limited to Norway and Denmark. We were talking quietly with Scandinavians but believed it would be embarrassing raise this week in NATO forum. Couve agreed and said French would also talk to Norwegians and Danes.

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4) Acting Secretary expressed our concern at case in COCOM involving ^{projected} French sales of certain types of cable to Soviets. He said this made us extremely nervous and he asked Couve, who was not repeat not well-informed, to look into this matter. Latter agreed.

5) Acting Secretary noted interest of Asian SEATO members in holding next meeting after Wellington session outside treaty area, and said US willing invite SEATO to Washington if UK and French agreed. Couve said he had no repeat no objection and indeed thought this a good idea.

6) Re tripartite talks scheduled for April 15, Couve said deGaulle's principal interest military rather than political. He thought Eisenhower-deGaulle talk would be best way straighten out this situation. Acting Secretary noted deGaulle had open invitation to Washington. Couve said it impossible for him accept now but if summit meeting occurred, Eisenhower-deGaulle meeting could undoubtedly be arranged. Couve said deGaulle had two things in mind: first was tripartite coordination on global problems while second was NATO reorganization. French had not repeat not presented specific ideas on NATO because this was secondary in deGaulle's mind and would be taken care of after problem of global coordination settled.

7) On fleet matter, Couve quoted from deGaulle press conference and said French intent was definitely not repeat not to weaken NATO. He added French were currently undertaking, he believed, conversations on this subject with SHAPE and also with CINCAFMED. On related question of Belleau Wood, Merchant noted French reach accommodation. action posed us with legal problem which we attempting find means/~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~

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He said we would be in touch with French in few days on this.

8) Couve raised question of contacts with FLN and said he pleased by decision conveyed by Merchant to Alphand yesterday (deptel to Paris 3624) to effect we would not repeat not now receive FLN representatives in Department. However he said principal problem was physical presence these men in US. He again asked visas not repeat not be granted or, if already granted, be revoked. Acting Secretary said we had studied this problem exhaustively and did not repeat not see what we could do in absence violation US law. Couve asked if we could not repeat not refuse visas on grounds individuals would engage in undesirable political activity. Acting Secretary referred to difficulties on this score we were already encountering in courts. Couve said this was serious problem which caused undesirable repercussions in Franco-US relations and led to anti-American feeling in France. Murphy reiterated difficulties since individuals concerned are residents of US. Acting Secretary said we could not repeat not do anything unless these men had been convicted of crime in court in country of their origin. Couve did not repeat not know whether Yazid convicted criminal in French court but said would look into matter. Murphy concluded we might also be able take action against Yazid if he had filled our visa questionnaire fraudulently.

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